

Message Text

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16

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ACDA-19 NIC-01 IO-14 SAJ-01 SCI-06

TRSE-00 OMB-01 EB-11 EPA-04 USIE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9941

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

USMISSION BERLIN IMMEDIATE

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 01339

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, GW, GE, WB

SUBJECT: GDR REPRESENTATIVE COMMENTS ON FEDERAL
ENVIRONMENT OFFICE

REF: BERLIN 141

1. UNOFFICIAL GDR EMISSARY VON BERG IS IN BONN THIS
WEEK FOR TALKS WITH FRG POLITICIANS AND OFFICIALS,
APPARENTLY TO TRY TO ASSESS THE POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE
IN WEST GERMANY AS WELL AS THE STATE OF FRG-GDR
RELATIONS. HE MET, AT HIS REQUEST, WITH EMBOFF JANUARY
24. SUBJECT OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TO
ESTABLISH ITS ENVIRONMENTAL OFFICE IN WEST BERLIN
NATURALLY AROSE.

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2. VON BERG TOOK SOMEWHAT SURPRISING POSITION, NAMELY THAT IT IS THE SOVIETS ENTIRELY WHO ARE BEHIND THE EE PRESSURE AGAINST THE OFFICE'S ESTABLISHMENT IN WEST BERLIN. HE SAID THE GDR NOW RECOGNIZED THAT THE BERLIN AGREEMENT LEFT THE FRG FAIRLY FREE TO BUILD UP ITS PRESENCE IN WEST BERLIN; THE GDR THEREFORE FEELS IT WAS MISLED BY THE SOVIETS IN THIS REGARD. VON BERG SAID THE SOVIETS WERE NOW REACTING SHARPLY ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL OFFICE BECAUSE OF THE GDR'S EXPRESSIONS OF DISSATISFACTION WITH THE WAY THE BERLIN AGREEMENT IS WORKING OUT. THE ISSUE HAD BECOME ONE OF PRESTIGE FOR MOSCOW, WHICH WANTED TO DEMONSTRATE ITS FIRMNESS.

3. VON BERG WAS QUITE EMPHATIC IN STATING THAT NO CONCRETE COUNTER-MEASURES WOULD BE TAKEN BY THE GDR AS A RESULT OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE OFFICE IN WEST BERLIN AND HE EXPRESSED DOUBT THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD PUSH FOR THEM EITHER. IN SUM, HIS APPROACH WAS TO PLAY DOWN THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE WHOLE AFFAIR.

4. COMMENT: WHETHER OR NOT VON BERG'S ALLEGATIONS ABOUT THE SOVIET ROLE ARE TRUE, IT IS INTERESTING THAT HE ATTEMPTED TO PLAY DOWN THE IMPORTANCE OF THE MATTER. IT MAY WELL BE, AS SUGGESTED IN REFTEL, THAT THE SOVIETS AND GDR ARE ADOPTING A FAIRLY CAREFUL STANCE IN ORDER TO LEAVE THE WAY OPEN TO BACK AWAY FROM ANY REAL CONFRONTATION WITH THE ALLIES.

5. ON THE OTHER HAND, VON BERG'S REMARKS SEEM TO US TO UNDERSCORE THE DESIRABILITY OF A FIRM APPROACH TO THE SOVIETS, IF INDEED THEY ARE THE PRIME MOVERS IN THIS MANEUVER.
HILLENBRAND

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